



THE INTERIM

A Monthly Newsletter of the Montana Legislative Branch

Volume XVI, No. 1

Helena, Montana

June 2007

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THE INTERIM

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THE INTERIM is a monthly newsletter that reports on the interim activities of legislative committees, including the Legislative Council, the Environmental Quality Council, the Legislative Finance Committee, the Legislative Audit Committee, and interim legislative committees and subcommittees staffed by the Legislative Services Division. Information about the committees, including meeting schedules, agendas, and reports, is found at <http://www.leg.mt.gov>. Follow the "Committees" link or the "Interims" link to the relevant committee. The newsletter is posted on the legislative branch website on the first of each month (follow the "Publications" link).

INTERIM NEWSLETTER RESUMES

Newsletter Reports on Legislative Interim Activities...Publication of *THE INTERIM* resumes with this issue and continues each month through December 2008. The monthly newsletter reports on the interim studies and other activities of legislative committees, including the Legislative Council, the Environmental Quality Council, the Legislative Finance Committee, the Legislative Audit Committee, and legislative interim committees staffed by the Legislative Services Division. These committees include the:

- Children, Families, Health, and Human Services Committee;
- Economic Affairs Committee;
- Education and Local Government Committee;
- Energy and Telecommunications Committee;
- Law and Justice Committee;
- Revenue and Transportation Committee;
- State Administration and Veterans' Affairs Committee; and
- State-Tribal Relations Committee.

Interim committees conduct interim studies as assigned or as may be determined by a particular committee. The committees are also responsible for administrative rule review and state agency monitoring. They may also recommend legislative changes to improve the operation of a state agency within a committee's jurisdiction. The public is encouraged to participate in the activities of interim committees.

The newsletter will also report on the Water Policy Interim Committee that was created by House Bill 304. That committee will study issues related to water quantity, water quality, and water use in Montana. The committee is required to prepare a report to submit to the 61st Legislature that provides clear policy direction and necessary legislation to guide Montana's water policy and that ensures fair and reasonable use of Montana's water resources as demands on water increase while supplies remain the same or decrease.

Elsewhere in this issue (beginning on pg. 6) is a listing of the membership of the interim and permanent committees described above as well as the legislative membership of other committees, councils, boards, and panels on which legislators serve.

A regular feature of the newsletter is **The Back Page** which presents an in-depth analysis each month on a topic of importance to Montanans, such as public education, televised coverage of the Legislature, taxation and budgeting, health care, economic development, energy, natural resources, climate change, and transportation. Articles will also include topics of professional interest of staff and other themes. This month's article discusses the assignment of interim studies to the various committees.

A calendar of events is provided in each issue. Dates for committee meetings are not always firm because interim committees sometimes have to change dates in response to unforeseen circumstances. Committees are urged, however, to plan carefully to minimize confusion caused by changing meeting dates.

A Publication of **Legislative Services Division**

Subscriptions...Members of the Legislature, elected officials, and state department heads receive copies of the newsletter. *THE INTERIM* is also available to the public. The annual subscription cost is \$24 for the 19 issues that will appear between June 2007 and December 2008. Subscriptions may be ordered from the Legislative Services Division by calling (406) 444-3064 or by writing to PO Box 201701, Helena, MT, 59620-1706. The newsletter is also available without charge on the legislative branch website at <http://www.leg.mt.gov/css/default.asp> by clicking on "Publications" and following the links to the interim newsletter. You can also sign up for electronic notice on the newsletter webpage.

If you have any questions, comments, or suggestions regarding *THE INTERIM*, please contact Jeff Martin at (406) 444-3595 or jmartin@mt.gov.

SALARY AND EXPENSE REIMBURSEMENT DURING THE INTERIM

General Provisions...When the Legislature is not in session, a legislator who is engaged in legislative business with prior authorization of the appropriate funding authority is entitled to a mileage allowance, a meal allowance, reimbursement of lodging, and a salary equal to one full day's pay for each 24-hour period of time (from midnight to midnight), or portion of that time, spent away from home. If time spent for nonlegislative business lengthens a legislator's time away from home into an additional 24-hour period, the legislator may not be compensated for the additional day.

Legislators should use the mode of travel that provides the lowest overall cost to the state. Make lodging reservations early to obtain state-rate rooms and always request state employee rates. Commercial airline reservations should be made early to obtain discounted rates and costly schedule changes should be avoided.

Guidelines for evaluating reasonableness of claims...The Financial and Human Resource Office, Legislative Services Division, uses the following guidelines to determine if a legislator's claim is reasonable and falls within the context of authorized legislative business:

- Overnight lodging is reasonable when a legislator would be required to leave home earlier than 6:30 a.m. or arrive home later than 9:30 p.m. in order to have attended all of the meeting or have conducted all of the legislative business authorized. To determine whether overnight lodging is allowed, an average travel speed (including incidental stops) of 50 miles an hour is used.
- A legislator is considered necessarily away from home on the day of a meeting or other authorized legislative activity and on any other day when travel

described above is required.

- A meal falling within reasonable travel times may be claimed.

Mitigating factors are considered in establishing reasonableness. Those factors may include inclement weather, individual health concerns, variables related to flying instead of driving, and schedule conflicts that require a member to choose a more expensive mode of travel in order to participate in the legislative activity.

Reimbursement Rates for the 2007-08 Interim	
In-state meals (receipts NOT required)	Breakfast \$5.00; Lunch \$6.00; Dinner \$12.00
Mileage (receipt NOT required)	\$.485/mile for first 1,000 miles each month; \$.455/mile thereafter
In-state Lodging (receipt IS required)	\$67/day, plus applicable taxes, total \$71.69
Non-receipted lodging (e.g., stay with family)	\$12/day

Submission of claims...Legislators must complete and sign a claim form to receive payment of salary and reimbursement of expenses. Claim forms are available from committee secretaries and from the Financial and Human Resource Office, Room 154 in the Capitol. Return the claim to the committee secretary or to the financial office with original receipts as noted on the form. The claim should be completed and signed in ink and should clearly state the number of days of salary, lodging, and meals claimed.

Mitigating or special circumstances related to the determination of reasonableness of the claim, as discussed above, should be clearly noted.

Legislators will usually receive two state warrants for each claim submitted, one for expenses and one for salary. Expenses are reimbursed within 3 working days of receipt of the claim by financial staff. Legislative salaries are paid under the biweekly state payroll cycle. Claim forms that are incomplete or that do not include required receipts may be returned to the legislator for completion.

Legislators living in Helena...A legislator who lives in Helena and attends an interim committee meeting in Helena is not entitled to mileage or lodging reimbursement. However, the legislator is entitled to a midday meal allowance on the day of the meeting regardless of the proximity of the meeting place to the individual's residence. In addition, the legislator may claim salary in the same manner as all other legislators.

Timely submission of claims...State policy requires that requests for reimbursement of travel costs be submitted within 3 months of incurring the expense or the right to

reimbursement is waived. To comply with policy, the legislative branch cannot process payment if reimbursement requests are submitted outside the 3-month window.

Contact information...For more information about filing claims for reimbursement, contact Karen Berger, financial services manager, at (406) 444-3411 or kberger@mt.gov or Jennifer Simmons, accounting technician at (406) 444-9542 or jsimmons@mt.gov.

COMMITTEE EMAIL NOTIFICATION

Notification of interim committee Information by email available...If you have not previously signed-up and would like to receive email notification of interim committee meetings, agendas, reports, minutes, and other information you may subscribe to one or more interim committee elists by going to http://leg.mt.gov/css/email_logon.asp. Simply enter your email address, hit the "submit" button and you can sign up for any of the following interim committees: Children, Families, Health and Human Services; Computer System Planning Council; Economic Affairs; Education and Local Government; Environmental Quality Council; Energy and Telecommunications; Law and Justice; Revenue and Transportation; State Administration and Veterans' Affairs; State-Tribal Relations; and Water Policy. Email sign-up is also available on each interim committee website.

If you subscribed to email notification last interim you do not need to sign-up again unless you have changed your email address.

For more information about the email sign-up, please contact Alysa Eaton, branch webmaster, at aeaton@mt.gov or (406) 444-3591.

CENSUS UPDATE

Help the count...Every person counts is the basis for much of what is good about our country. But making sure every person gets counted is a monumental task.

The 2010 Census is about three years away, but that isn't much time when it comes to counting every man, woman, and child in the country. This summer, local governments in Montana have a chance to make sure their citizens are counted. And state lawmakers would do well to encourage local officials to participate in the Local Update of Census Addresses program.

Here is how the program works: The federal government maintains a confidential master address file of all the addresses in the country. However, no one expects the file to be 100 percent accurate or able to keep up with every change. This file is important because it is the one used to send out the census forms as well as for follow-up visits.

Local governments that register to participate in the program will have the chance to check the federal master address list against their own lists, such as tax rolls, building

permits, or zoning records. The more accurate the list, the better the odds that every one in the community will be counted--that matters a lot when it comes to doling out state and federal tax dollars.

Informational meetings about the LUCA program are being held in Great Falls, Havre, Helena, Bozeman, and Billings in the first part of June. For schedules and more information about participating in LUCA visit this web page: <http://www.ceic.mt.gov/luca.asp>

STATE-TRIBAL RELATIONS COMMITTEE

Election of officers...An organizational meeting of the State-Tribal Relations Committee is set for June 15 from 9 a.m. to noon in Room 137 of the Capitol. In addition to choosing officers, committee members will review potential meeting dates and make recommendations for which two reservations they hope to visit during the interim.

There is no study assigned to the committee for the interim, so committee members will have the opportunity to delve into a wide variety of topics, including gambling, Indian Education for All, water compacts, and economic development prospects.

Activity updates...At the June meeting, Tommy Stiffarm will discuss plans for a Sacred Hoop Journey, which is part of an effort to increase awareness of Native Americans incarcerated in the Montana correctional system and to reduce the number of Native Americans in prison. The Sacred Hoop Journey is scheduled to start Aug. 20 at the Riverside Youth Correctional Facility in Boulder. The journey will include visits to other correctional facilities and to tribal colleges, ending Aug. 31 at the Montana Women's Prison in Billings.

Staff from the State-Tribal Economic Development Commission and the Governor's Office of Indian Affairs will present brief updates on their activities.

Members and meeting notification...Members of the State-Tribal Relations Committee are: Sens. Rick Laible, Frank Smith, Don Steinbeisser, and Joe Tropila, and Reps. Gordon Hendrick, Joey Jayne, Ken Peterson, and Jonathan Windy Boy. To sign up for email notices or to follow meeting activities, visit the legislative branch website and under "Committees" click on State-Tribal Relations. To sign up for postal notifications, contact Pat Murdo or Dawn Field at (406) 444-3064.

WATER QUALITY COMMITTEE

New interim committee to focus solely on water policy...In the past, water policy was part of the work of the Environmental Quality Council, another interim committee. But the 2007 Legislature passed HB 304 which, for this interim, created a committee that will conduct a detailed analysis of water quantity, quality, and use in Montana.

Among other things, the committee will examine surface and ground water issues in closed basins, including management issues such as mitigation and aquifer recharge. Water quality issues also will be analyzed.

The committee is charged with gathering information necessary to make sound and well-reasoned policy decisions to guide the management and use of Montana's ground water, including but not limited to identifying gaps in data necessary to determine appropriate locations to conduct artificial recharge of ground water and presenting long-term goals and policy proposals for ground water management.

The Legislature appropriated \$50,000 from the general fund to the committee for the study and another \$50,000 from the general fund to the Montana Bureau of Mines and Geology to collect and compile existing ground water and aquifer testing data.

Senate members of the committee are Bill Tash of Dillon, Greg Lind and Dave Wanzenried of Missoula, and Gary Perry of Manhattan. House members are Scott Boggio of Red Lodge, Ed Hilbert of Glendive, Jill Cohenour of East Helena, and Bill McChesney of Miles City.

July meeting planned...The first meeting is scheduled for July 10 and 11 in a place to be determined. For more information, contact Krista Lee Evans at (406) 444-1640 or kevans@mt.gov.

CHILDREN, FAMILIES, HEALTH, AND HUMAN SERVICES COMMITTEE

Checking up on health care in Montana...The Children, Families, Health, and Human Services Interim Committee will focus on several health-care issues over the interim. The Legislative Council assigned two interim studies to the committee:

- Senate Joint Resolution 5, a study of acute care and emergency medical services, to identify challenges facing the state's emergency care system and strategies to ensure that the system remains viable; and
- Senate Joint Resolution 15, a study of the impact of health-care services delivery systems--including physician-owned facilities and specialty hospitals--with an eye toward the services that various types of facilities provide and the advantages or disadvantages they may create in the overall delivery of health care in Montana.

In addition, the Legislative Council assigned the top-ranked House Joint Resolution 48 study of health insurance reform to the Economic Affairs Interim Committee, but suggested that the work be done by a subcommittee made up of members of CFHHS and the Economic Affairs Committee. The HJR 48 study will focus on the possibility of creating a system of universal and portable health insurance

coverage for all Montanans. Because the study will examine potential changes affecting both private health insurance issuers and public programs providing health coverage to low-income Montanans, the Legislative Council felt both committees should be involved in it.

Organizational meeting set for June 26...The committee will hold its organizational meeting on June 26 at 8:30 a.m. in Room 102 of the Capitol. The committee will elect officers and map out a work plan for the interim. Members will decide how much time to devote to each of the study topics and to oversight tasks related to the Department of Public Health and Human Services. If the Economic Affairs Interim Committee approves a joint subcommittee for the HJR 48 study of health insurance reforms, the CFHHS Committee will decide whether to participate. If it does, it will select members for the subcommittee and discuss whether the subcommittee should have primary responsibility for the SJR 15 study on the delivery of health-care services.

House members are Edith Clark of Sweet Grass, Ernie Dutton of Billings, and Teresa Henry and Diane Sands, both of Missoula. Senate members are Carol Juneau of Browning, Terry Murphy of Cardwell, and Dan Weinberg of Whitefish. Sen. John Esp of Big Timber also was appointed to the committee, but has since said he will be unable to serve; the Senate Committee on Committees will name a replacement in June.

As senior senator, Weinberg will serve as chairman of the organizational meeting.

Stay tuned...Interested in receiving committee updates, including notification of meetings? You can sign up for electronic notices via the committee website, www.leg.mt.gov/css/committees/interim/2007_2008/child_fam/default.asp. To be put on a list for notification by mail, contact Sue O'Connell at (406) 444-3597 or soconnell@mt.gov.

ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY COUNCIL

EQC to meet in June...The first meeting of the Environmental Quality Council for the interim is June 28-29 in Helena.

The Legislative Council assigned the EQC a study of conservation easements on state trust lands. The House Joint Resolution 57 study requires an evaluation of the effects of establishing conservation easements on state trust lands, including costs, benefits, compatibility with existing uses, and how to ensure that multiple use management occurs in the future.

Council members also may propose issues to be included in the committee's work plan.

The EQC was created by the 1971 Montana Environmental Policy Act. The council's purpose is to encourage conditions under which people can coexist with nature in "productive harmony". It fulfills this purpose by assisting the Legislature in the development of natural

resource and environmental policy, by conducting studies on related issues, and by serving in an advisory capacity to the state's natural resource programs.

The EQC is composed of 17 Montanans, including six senators, six representatives, four public members and one nonvoting member who represents the governor.

Senate members are Bob Hawks of Bozeman, Christine Kaufmann of Helena, Dan McGee of Laurel, Jim Shockley of Victor, Bob Story of Park City, and Dave Wanzenried of Missoula. House members are Carol Lambert of Broadus, Chas Vincent of Libby, Craig Witte of Kalispell, Norma Bixby of Lame Deer, Sue Dickenson of Great Falls, and Julie French of Scobey. Public members appointed by the Senate are Brian Cebull and Diane Conradi. Public members appointed by the House are Kris Kok and John Brendan. The governor's representative is Mike Volesky.

For more information about EQC, contact Todd Everts at (406) 444-3747 or teverts@mt.gov.

LEGISLATIVE FINANCE COMMITTEE

Committee and membership...The Legislative Finance Committee is a permanent, bipartisan committee of the Legislature (established in Title 5, Chapter 12, part 2, MCA). During the interim, the committee monitors fiscal activities of state government and oversees the budget analysis and research functions of the Legislative Fiscal Division. The committee is also responsible for oversight of the information technology policies of the state, a duty added by the 2001 Legislature. Senate members are Keith Bales, John Cobb, John Brueggeman, Trudi Schmidt, Dave Wanzenried, and Carol Williams. House members are Ron Erickson, Cynthia Hiner, Dave Kasten, Rick Ripley, Jon Sesso, and Janna Taylor.

June Meeting...Seven meetings are likely this interim, with the first one **tentatively** scheduled for Monday, June 18 at 9 a.m. in Room 102 of the Capitol. The agenda and reports for this meeting will be available on Legislative Fiscal Division website at <http://www.leg.mt.gov/css/fiscal/default.asp>, or you can contact Clayton Schenck for more information at cschenck@mt.gov or any LFD staff at (406) 444-2986.

Because the June meeting date has not yet been confirmed, interested persons should check the website for the final schedule. The agenda for this meeting, which is primarily organizational, is expected to include:

- The election of committee officers
- An update on the *Legislative Fiscal Report: 2009 Biennium*
- An overview of the role and authority of the committee and the role of the Legislative Fiscal Division staff
- An overview of the LFC's oversight of information technology management

- A discussion of a proposed Legislative Fiscal Division work plan for the 2007-08 interim

Fiscal report available in late June or early July...The *Legislative Fiscal Report: 2009 Biennium* will be available late June or early July. The report has been delayed because the state budget for the biennium was not enacted until the May special session. Fiscal staff could not begin preparation of the fiscal report until the special session was completed. The 1,400+ page report documents the Legislature's fiscal decisions during the 2007 regular session and the May special session. The report includes revenue estimates and anticipated revenue changes resulting from legislation, and an analysis of agency budgets. The report will be issued in the following format:

Volume 1: Statewide Perspectives (budget overview)
Volume 2: Revenue Estimates
Volume 3 +: Agency Budgets

Regardless of an individual's desired level of detail regarding state fiscal matters, this publication is an excellent source of information for legislators, state agencies, and the public. It will be a reference source for fiscal data for years to come. The report is printed for a limited distribution and is also available on the LFD website.

ECONOMIC AFFAIRS COMMITTEE

Four studies assigned to committee...The Economic Affairs Interim Committee will hold an organizational meeting on June 15 at 1 p.m. in Room 137 of the state Capitol. The committee will choose presiding officers and review the studies that have been assigned to the committee for the interim. Four studies were assigned to the committee including the highest rated study from the interim study poll, health insurance reform and publicly funded health care programs. The committee will also study value-added agriculture and take on two studies related to economic development. In addition to developing a work plan for the interim, the committee will hear from the Departments of Commerce, Labor and Industry, Livestock, and the Governor's Office of Economic Opportunity.

For more information about the committee, contact Andrew Geiger at (406) 444-5367 or angeiger@mt.gov.

REVENUE AND TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE

Organizational meeting scheduled for June 21...The Revenue and Transportation Interim Committee is scheduled to meet Thursday, June 21 in Room 137 of the Capitol at **1 p.m.** The primary purpose of the meeting is to elect officers, review a draft work plan, and adopt a meeting schedule for

the rest of the interim. An agenda for the meeting will be available early in June.

Three studies assigned to committee...The Legislative Council assigned two interim studies to the committee. House Joint Resolution 61 requests a study of the linkage of state and federal income taxes and Senate Joint Resolution 31 requests a study of taxation and school funding. House Bill 488 directs the committee to study property taxes and periodic reappraisal.

Want to be in the Loop?...Anyone who was not on the committee's mailing list last interim and would like to be may contact committee staff or sign up electronically (see the related article on pg. 3 on committee email notification). Individuals on the overland mailing list will receive meeting notices and agendas, while individuals on the electronic mailing list will receive notices of and links to everything that is posted on the committee's website.

For more information about the committee, please contact Jeff Martin at (406) 444-3595 or jmartin@mt.gov or Fong Hom, committee secretary, at (406) 444-0502 or fhom@mt.gov. Lee Heiman is the staff attorney and may be reached at (406) 444-4022 or lheiman@mt.gov.

LAW AND JUSTICE COMMITTEE

The Law and Justice Interim Committee will be hold its first meeting on Friday, July 13 in Room 102 of the Capitol, beginning at 8:30 a.m. Contact Sheri Heffelfinger at (406) 444-3596 for more information

LEGISLATIVE INTERIM COMMITTEE ASSIGNMENTS

LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL

Rep. Bob Bergren	Sen. Vicki Cocchiarella
Rep. Debby Barrett	Sen. Dan Harrington
Rep. Margaret Campbell	Sen. Greg Barkus
Rep. Dennis Himmelberger	Sen. Kelly Gebhardt
Rep. Dave McAlpin	Sen. Mike Cooney
Rep. Scott Sales	Sen. Cory Stapleton

LEGISLATIVE AUDIT COMMITTEE

Rep. Bill Glaser	Sen. Mitch Tropila
Rep. John Sinrud	Sen. Steve Gallus
Rep. Bill Beck	Sen. Lynda Moss
Rep. Betsy Hands	Sen. Joe Balyeat
Rep. Hal Jacobson	Sen. Greg Barkus
Rep. Mike Phillips	Sen. Dave Lewis
Staffed by the Legislative Audit Division	

LEGISLATIVE FINANCE COMMITTEE

Rep. Janna Taylor	Sen. Trudi Schmidt
Rep. Dave Kasten	Sen. John Cobb

Rep. Rick Ripley	Sen. Dave Wanzenried
Rep. Jon Sesso	Sen. Carol Williams
Rep. Ron Erickson	Sen. Keith Bales
Rep. Cynthia Hiner	Sen. John Brueggeman
Staffed by the Legislative Fiscal Division	

CHILDREN, FAMILIES, HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES COMMITTEE

Rep. Ernie Dutton	Sen. Carol Juneau
Rep. Edith Clark	Sen. Dan Weinberg
Rep. Diane Sands	Sen. Terry Murphy
Rep. Teresa Henry	To be appointed

ECONOMIC AFFAIRS COMMITTEE

Rep. Scott Mendenhall	Sen. Frank Smith
Rep. Mike Milburn	Sen. Ken Hansen
Rep. Bill Thomas	Sen. Roy Brown
Rep. Michele Reinhart	Sen. Don Steinbeisser

EDUCATION AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT COMMITTEE

Rep. Bill Nooney	Sen. Kim Gillan
Rep. John Ward	Sen. Bob Hawks
Rep. Bob Lake	Sen. Sam Kitzenberg
Rep. Robin Hamilton	Sen. Dave Lewis
Rep. Gary Branae	Sen. Rick Laible
Rep. Wanda Grinde	Sen. Jim Peterson

ENERGY AND TELECOMMUNICATION COMMITTEE

Rep. Duane Ankney	Sen. Greg Lind
Rep. Harry Klock	Sen. Don Ryan
Rep. Robyn Driscoll	Sen. Jerry Black
Rep. Brady Wiseman	Sen. Verdell Jackson

ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY COUNCIL

Rep. Carol Lambert	Sen. Bob Hawks
Rep. Chas Vincent	Sen. Christine Kaufmann
Rep. Craig Witte	Sen. Dan McGee
Rep. Norma Bixby	Sen. Jim Shockley
Rep. Sue Dickenson	Sen. Bob Story
Rep. Julie French	Sen. Dave Wanzenried

Mike Volesky (governor's office)

Public members

Kris Kok	John Brendan
Brian Cebull	Diane Conradi

LAW AND JUSTICE COMMITTEE

Rep. Krayton Kerns	Sen. Larry Gent
Rep. Ron Stoker	Sen. Jesse Laslovich
Rep. Tom McGillvray	Sen. Carol Juneau
Rep. Deb Kottel	Sen. Dan McGee
Rep. Bob Ebinger	Sen. Gary Perry
Rep. Shannon Augare	Sen. Jim Shockley

LEGISLATIVE CONSUMER COMMITTEE

Rep. George Groesbeck	Sen. Joe Tropila
Rep. Walt McNutt	Sen. Terry Murphy

Staffed by the Consumer Counsel

REVENUE AND TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE

Rep. Bob Lake	Sen. Jim Elliott
Rep. Penny Morgan	Sen. Kim Gillan
Rep. Jon Sonju	Sen. Christine Kaufmann
Rep. Mike Jopek	Sen. Bob Story
Rep. Galen Hollenbaugh	Sen. Jim Peterson
Rep. Tim Furey	Sen. Jeff Essmann

STATE ADMINISTRATION AND VETERANS' AFFAIRS COMMITTEE

Rep. Pat Ingraham	Sen. Carolyn Squires
Rep. Gary MacLaren	Sen. Larry Jent
Rep. Veronica Small-Eastman	Sen. Kelly Gebhardt
Rep. Franke Wilmer	Sen. Verdell Jackson

STATE-TRIBAL RELATIONS COMMITTEE

Rep. Joey Jayne	Sen. Rick Laible
Rep. Gordon Hendrick	Sen. Frank Smith
Rep. Jonathan Windy Boy	Sen. Joe Tropila
Rep. Ken Peterson	Sen. Don Steinbeisser

WATER POLICY COMMITTEE

Rep. Scott Boggio	Sen. Greg Lind
Rep. Ed Hilbert	Sen. Gary Perry
Rep. Jill Cohenour	Sen. Bill Tash
Rep. Bill McChesney	Sen. Dave Wanzenried

CAPITOL COMPLEX ADVISORY COUNCIL

Rep. Elsie Arntzen	Sen. Carol Juneau
Rep. Mary Caferro	Sen. Dave Lewis

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ADVISORY COUNCIL

Rep. Roger Koopman	Sen. Kim Gillan
Rep. Dan Villa	Sen. Jerry Black

ELECTRONIC GOVERNMENT ADVISORY COUNCIL

Rep. Ernie Dutton	Sen. Mitch Tropila
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FUTURE FISHERIES REVIEW PANEL

Rep. Rick Jore	Sen. Steve Gallus
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INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY BOARD

Rep. Bill Beck	Sen. John Brueggeman
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ARCO LITIGATION OVERSIGHT COMMITTEE

Rep. Jim Keane	Sen. Dan Harrington
Rep. Jesse O'Hara	Sen. Dave Lewis

GAMING ADVISORY COUNCIL

Rep. Mark Blasdel	Sen. Joe Tropila
	Sen. Lane Larson (4/20/08)

HERITAGE PRESERVATION AND DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION

Rep. Diane Rice	Sen. Lynda Moss
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LAND INFORMATION ADVISORY COUNCIL

Rep. Jon Sesso	Sen. John Brueggeman
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LEGISLATIVE BRANCH COMPUTER SYSTEMS PLANNING

Rep. Llew Jones	Sen. John Brueggeman
Marilyn Miller, Chief Clerk	Clay Scott, Sgt. at Arms

MONTANA CONSENSUS COUNCIL BOARD

Rep. Kendall Van Dyke	Sen. Carol Williams
David Halvorson	Peggy Trenk (ex. 8/15/07)

RESERVED WATER RIGHTS COMPACT COMMISSION

Rep. Art Noonan	Sen. Jesse Laslovich
Rep. Jack Ross	Sen. Bill Tash

WORKFORCE INVESTMENT BOARD

Rep. Elsie Arntzen	Sen. Lane Larson
Rep. Arlene Becker	Sen. Gary Perry

PACIFIC NORTHWEST ECONOMIC REGION

Rep. Wanda Grinde	Sen. Kim Gillan
Rep. George Everett	Sen. Aubyn Curtiss

DRINKING WATER STATE REVOLVING LOAN FUND

Rep. Bruce Malcolm	Sen. Ken Hansen
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THE BACK PAGE

AN OVERVIEW OF 2007-08 INTERIM STUDIES AND ACTIVITIES

by Dave Bohyer
Legislative Services Division Research Director

History is past politics; and politics present history. John Seeley

INTRODUCTION

The Legislative Services Division (LSD) is required by statute to poll all legislators to determine the relative priority of each study requested by the Legislature by joint resolution. The poll is to be conducted "immediately" after the Legislature adjourns. The results of the poll are to be considered by the Legislative Council, which has the statutory authority to assign the study requests to the various legislative committees that function during the interim between regular legislative sessions. This Back Page article describes the poll of the 60th Legislature and its results, and actions taken by the Legislative Council on May 15, 2007, to assign the studies.

THE INTERIM STUDY POLL

The LSD staff mailed the poll on April 30. There were 21 studies included in the poll. A return date of May 7 was set, primarily to accommodate the demands of the interim workload. The LSD staff compiled data from the poll ballots through May 11 and reported the results to the Legislative Council on May 15.

RESULTS OF THE POLL

Of the 150 ballots sent out, 98 were returned in time to be counted, for a participation rate of 65%. (There were several other ballots returned too late to be counted in the poll, which would have increased participation to about 70% of the Legislature.)

The voting method used to conduct the poll was the Borda method, a method by which each study could be ranked, with a ranking of "1" being the highest and a ranking of "21" being the lowest. Points were then assigned in reverse order, with a study ranked as "1" receiving 21 points and a study ranked as "21" receiving 1 point and the same method applied to rankings in between. (This method is used by media organizations to rank intercollegiate sports teams.) A study unranked on a ballot received zero points.

The average number of points received by the studies was 793 points. The highest ranking study, HJR 48, received 1,323 points. At the other end of the scale, HJR 45 received only 161 points. Of the 21 studies in the poll, nine received more than the average number of points and 12 received fewer. The median number of points received was 983, meaning that 10 studies received more than 983 points and 10 studies received fewer.

FINDINGS ABOUT THE POLL

Slightly more than 2 out of 3 legislators (70%) responded to the 2007 Poll, compared to 82% in 2005, 78% in 2003, and 84% in 2001.

The 60th Legislature also assigned four studies by bill to a legislative interim or statutory committee. The first of these, HB 49, directs a 10-member subcommittee of the Education and Local Government Interim Committee to study local government special purpose districts. House Bill 304 establishes a Water Policy Interim Committee and assigns it to study "...issues related to water quantity, water quality, and water use in Montana." House Bill No. 488 directs the Revenue and Transportation Interim Committee to study the periodic revaluation of taxable property that is required by 15-7-111, MCA. Finally, tucked away in Section 19(4) of HB 831 is a study to be conducted by "an appropriate interim committee" of drinking water standards and effluent treatment standards in other jurisdictions. The HB 831 language also requires the interim committee assigned to perform the study to also recommend appropriate treatment standards for purposes of aquifer recharge and mitigation. It is likely that the EQC or the Water Policy Interim Committee will undertake the study.

The LSD staff recommended that 16 of the 21 studies requested by resolution be conducted; the Legislative Council generally concurred with the staff's advice.

LSD STAFF RECOMMENDATIONS

Three factors guided the staff recommendations to the Legislative Council:

- the results/rankings of the poll;
- resource availability -- committee and staff time and appropriations; and
- balancing time commitments and work loads among committees.

Because the Legislative Council has the responsibility to assign interim studies, the staff recommendations are simply that: recommendations. Nevertheless, they are influenced by a number of considerations that should not be ignored. Some of those considerations include:

- All interim studies are not created equal. Some have considerable breadth, depth, and complexity, while others are narrow and focused. Thus, Study B is not necessarily balanced with or interchangeable with Study A.
- The work load of interim committees is not equal. Some have more extensive statutory duties and broader jurisdictions than others. Some have more members than others. Some have formed subcommittees that function much the same as full committees in terms of staff time and committee

member effort.

- Interim studies are only part of what interim committees do during the interim. Each committee has a laundry list of statutory duties, including agency monitoring, administrative rule review, and consideration of potential legislation proposed by state agencies within each committee's jurisdiction.
- Each interim committee has the statutory authority to examine issues within its purview, which typically extends beyond interim studies assigned. Staff experience suggests that each committee will exercise that authority to a greater or lesser extent. The issues that might arise or the level of involvement cannot be foreseen, but there is a history that these types of projects are likely to occur.
- Resources--staff time, committee time, and funding--are all limited.

LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL ACTION

The Legislative Council met immediately following adjournment of the May 2007 Special Session to consider, select, and assign studies requested by resolution. After hearing from LSD staff on the results of the interim study poll and the staff's recommendations and, by letter, from Sen. Jeff Essmann regarding the study of Montana taxation and school finance, council members took action and made the

assignments as shown in the table below.

PREVIEW OF INTERIM ACTIVITIES

The 2007-08 interim is just beginning to take shape. None of the interim committees has met yet, but committee appointments have been made.

Staffing assignments for the interim committees are also taking shape. Following the table is a list, by committee, of the staffing assignments that are contemplated for the interim, but are subject to change.

In addition to the interim studies assigned by the Legislative Council, each interim committee has a variety of statutory duties and responsibilities, which can be found in Title 5, chapter 5, part 2, MCA, or, specifically for the EQC, in Title 75, chapter 1, part 3, MCA. The duties and responsibilities for the administrative committees of the Legislature that meet during the interim are contained in various chapters within Title 5, MCA. Other committees on which legislators serve may be found elsewhere throughout the MCA.

With several committee meetings being planned for the summer, draft work plans and proposed meeting schedules will also be forthcoming shortly. Stay tuned as more information will be provided in subsequent issues of *The Interim* newsletter. In the meantime, check the LSD website or call the LSD at (406) 444-3064 with any questions you may have regarding the poll, a particular study, or any of the interim committees.

SUMMARY OF THE 2007-08 INTERIM STUDY POLL			
Rank	Resolution (Points)	Study Topic/Description	Legislative Council Assignment to Interim or Statutory Committee
1	HJR 48 (1,323)	Study of health insurance reform and publicly funded health care programs	Economic Affairs Committee
2	SJR 31 (1,264)	Study taxation and school funding	Revenue and Transportation Committee
3	SJR 24 (1,249)	Study prison population growth and alternative sentencing	Law and Justice Committee
4	HJR 46 (1,175)	Study election laws	State Administration and Veterans' Affairs Committee
5	HJR 26 (1,125)	Study mental health issues in criminal and juvenile justice systems	Law and Justice Committee
6	HJR 59 (989)	Study redesign of public retirement systems	State Administration and Veterans' Affairs Committee

SUMMARY OF THE 2007-08 INTERIM STUDY POLL			
Rank	Resolution (Points)	Study Topic/Description	Legislative Council Assignment to Interim or Statutory Committee
7	SJR 15 (912)	Study impacts of certain services on health care delivery	Children, Families, Health, and Human Services Committee
8	HJR 50 (903)	Study mental health precommitment process	Law and Justice Committee
9	HJR 57 (804)	Study conservation easements on state land	Environmental Quality Council
10	SJR 13 (790)	Resolution for study on value-added agriculture	Economic Affairs Committee
11	SJR 5 (783)	Study acute care and rural emergency medical services	Children, Families, Health, and Human Services Committee
12	SJR 6 (729)	Study of juvenile justice system	Law and Justice Committee
13	HJR 61 (728)	Study linkage of state and federal income taxes	Revenue and Transportation Committee
14	HJR 39 (721)	Study economic development	Economic Affairs Committee
16	HJR 22 (653)	Study payback and incentive for dental students	Education and Local Government Committee
17	HJR 28 (580)	Study state business infrastructure	Economic Affairs Committee
15	SJR 2 (655)	Study DUI laws	Not Assigned
18	HJR 52 (488)	Study problem gambling	Not Assigned
19	HJR 47 (437)	Study funding of Montana genetics program	Not Assigned
20	HJR 33 (192)	Study polio	Not Assigned
21	HJR 45 (161)	Study options for state document systems to reflect actual names	Not Assigned

MEAN = 793 MEDIAN = 783 BALLOTS = 98 returned & counted as of May 11, 2007, (65%); 103 total returned (69%).

Note: The Legislative Council has the statutory responsibility and discretion to assign the interim studies requested by resolution.

CHILDREN, FAMILIES, HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES INTERIM COMMITTEE

Staffing

Lead: Sue O'Connell, Research Analyst
 Attorney: Lisa Mecklenberg Jackson
 Secretary: Fong Hom

Interim Study Assignment

SJR 15: Study impacts of certain services on

health care delivery

SJR 5: Study acute care and rural emergency medical services

Coordinate and collaborate as necessary on studies of health insurance (Economic Affairs Interim Committee) and mental illness services (Law and Justice Interim Committee)

ECONOMIC AFFAIRS INTERIM COMMITTEE

Staffing

Lead: Andrew Geiger, Research Analyst
 Attorney: Bart Campbell
 Secretary: Dawn Field

Interim Study Assignment

HJR 48: Study health insurance reform and publicly funded health care programs (coordinate with Children, Families, Health and Human Services Committee)
 SJR 13: Study of value-added agriculture
 HJR 39: Study economic development
 HJR 28: Study state business infrastructure

EDUCATION AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT INTERIM COMMITTEE

Staffing

Lead: Casey Barrs, Research Analyst
 Attorney: Eddy McClure
 Secretary: Fong Hom

Interim Study Assignment

HB 49: Require study of local government special purpose districts (Leanne Heisel, lead staff to study and subcommittee)
 HJR 22: Study payback and incentive for dental students

ENERGY AND TELECOMMUNICATIONS INTERIM COMMITTEE

Staffing

Lead: Sonja Lee, Research Analyst
 Attorney: Todd Everts
 Secretary: Dawn Field

Interim Study Assignment

No studies assigned

LAW AND JUSTICE INTERIM COMMITTEE

Staffing

Lead: Sheri Heffelfinger, Research Analyst
 Attorney: Valencia Lane
 Secretary: Dawn Field

Interim Study Assignment

SJR 24: Study prison population growth and alternative sentencing
 HJR 26: Study mental health issues in criminal and juvenile justice systems (Coordinate with Children, Families, Health and Human

Services Committee)

HJR 50: Study mental health precommitment process (Coordinate with Children, Families, Health and Human Services Committee)

SJR 6: Juvenile justice interim study

REVENUE AND TRANSPORTATION INTERIM COMMITTEE

Staffing

Lead: Jeff Martin, Research Analyst
 Attorney: Lee Heiman
 Secretary: Fong Hom

Interim Study Assignment

HB 488: Study of property taxes and periodic reappraisal
 SJR 31: Study of taxation and school funding
 HJR 61: Study linkage of state and federal income taxes

STATE ADMINISTRATION AND VETERANS' AFFAIRS INTERIM COMMITTEE

Staffing

Lead: Dave Bohyer, Research Director
 Attorney: TBD
 Secretary: Fong Hom

Interim Study Assignment

HJR 46: Study of election laws
 HJR 59: Study redesign of public retirement systems

STATE/TRIBAL RELATIONS INTERIM COMMITTEE

Staffing

Lead: Pat Murdo, Research Analyst
 Attorney: Eddy McClure
 Secretary: Dawn Field

Interim Study Assignment

No studies assigned

ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY COUNCIL

Staffing

Lead: Todd Everts, Legislative Environmental Analyst
 Joe Kolman, Research Analyst
 Attorney: Todd Everts
 Secretary: TBD

Interim Study Assignment

HJR 57: Study conservation easements on state land

HB 831: Study of drinking water standards--may be coordinate with Water Policy Interim Committee

WATER POLICY INTERIM COMMITTEE

Staffing

Lead: Krista Lee Evans, Research Analyst
Attorney: TBD
Secretary: TBD

Interim Study Assignment

HB 304: Study of issues related to water quantity, water quality, and water use in Montana

LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL

Staffing

Lead: Susan Byorth Fox, Executive Director
Attorney: Greg Petesch, Legal Director
Secretary: Dawn Field

Interim Study Assignment

None assigned

LEGISLATIVE FINANCE COMMITTEE/FISCAL DIVISION STAFF

Staffing

Lead: Clayton Schenck
Attorney: TBD
Secretary: Diane McDuffie

Interim Study Assignment

None assigned



INTERIM CALENDAR

UNLESS OTHERWISE SPECIFIED, ALL ROOM DESIGNATIONS ARE IN THE CAPITOL

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
June 2007						
					1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15 State-Tribal Relations Committee, Room. 137, 9 a.m. Economic Affairs Committee, Room 137, 1 p.m.	16
17	18 Legislative Finance Committee, Room 102, 9 a.m.	19	20	21 State Admin- istration and Veterans' Affairs, Room 102 Revenue and Trans- portation Com. Room 137, 1 p.m. Legislative Council-- tentative	22	23
24	25	26 Children, Families, Health, and Human Services Committee, Room, 102, 8:30 a.m.	27	28 Environmental Quality Council	29 Environmental Quality Council	30

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
July 2007						
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10 Water Policy Committee	11 Water Policy Committee	12	13 Law and Justice Committee, Room 102, 8:30 a.m.	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30	31				

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